NPS Oral History Collection (HFCA 1817)
Association of National Park Rangers Oral History Project, 2012-2016

Phil Young
October 25, 2014

Interview conducted by Tessa Moening
Transcribed by Teresa Bergen
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ANPR Oral History Project

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Audiofile: YOUNG Phil 25 Oct 2014

[START OF TRACK 1]

Tessa Moening: This is Tessa Moening. I'm here with Phil Young at YMCA of the Rockies. And today is October 25, 2014. And thanks for being with me today.

Phil Young: It's my pleasure. Thanks for allowing this opportunity.

Tessa Moening: Absolutely. I guess we'll go ahead and just get started at the beginning. Where were you born and when?

Phil Young: I was born in the summer of 1947 in southern California, in Burbank, California, precisely.

Tessa Moening: Okay. Did you grow up in that area?

Phil Young: I did. My family had kennels. We raised terriers, basically to show in dog shows. So, we had a kennel in Burbank and another kennel out in Malibu. Guess which one I liked best? (laughter)

Tessa Moening: Yeah.

Phil Young: The one in Malibu. It was right on Pacific Coast Highway and there was a lot of open space around. I could just look out over the wall at the Pacific Ocean. So, it was pretty idealistic. It was a great place to live. The one in the San Fernando Valley, I had paternal grandparents right next door, too. So that was, I thought, kind of unique. But years later, when I met my spouse, I found out that her paternal grandmother lived right next door to her when she was growing up, too.

Tessa Moening: (laughs) You're meant for each other.

Phil Young: It's not so uncommon. I think it's becoming more uncommon. So anyway, it was a good place to grow up.

Tessa Moening: So that was the work your parents were involved in?

Phil Young: Actually, it was kind of a good paying hobby and sideline. My father was an engineer for the telephone company. Mom, like so many post-World War Two mothers, was a stay-at-home mom. But she definitely worked fulltime having a kennel in the backyard. You know, one of the kennels, the one in Burbank, we'd usually have about two dozen dogs in the backyard. And the one in Malibu, we could have up to 120.

Tessa Moening: Wow.

Phil Young: So, running those businesses was definitely a fulltime job. That and taking care of the kids.

Tessa Moening: (laughs) She had her hands full.

Phil Young: Yeah. Yeah, she did.

Tessa Moening: Were the national parks a significant part of your childhood at all?

Phil Young: I wouldn't say significant, but they were a part. I certainly remember extended family vacations. My paternal grandparents would take me on camping trips, and sometimes we would certainly go visit national park areas as part of those camping trips, even though we'd usually camp in national forest areas.

Tessa Moening: Oh. (laughs)

Phil Young: In the Sierras. But I remember specifically a trip with my maternal aunt and her sons, my cousins. We went to Sequoia-Kings Canyon. I was probably 10 at the time. Then we went up to Yosemite. And Yosemite Valley, I remember camping there, and how blown away we were by seeing the fire fall. That led to some subsequent actions of mine that weren't the most enlightened. Sometime in the future, that I'll talk about. But as a kid, yeah, we just really enjoyed visiting Yosemite. I still remember hearing ranger talks around the campfire.

Phil Young: There was another trip to Yosemite. My mother had worked for a doctor before I was born, and he was still a good friend of the family. I went with his family, too, on a family vacation up to Yosemite.

Tessa Moening: You did some of those ranger talks. What other kinds of things did you guys do when you were in parks?

Phil Young: Basically, it was just general sightseeing, short hikes, a lot of photography. We were young kids, so we did a lot of running around.

Tessa Moening: (laughs) You did? Okay.

Phil Young: Yeah.

Tessa Moening: Sounds like we've got a story for another time coming from there?

Phil Young: I do. I do.

Tessa Moening: Suspense. (laughs) Okay. Let's see. What was your education like?

Phil Young: Well, from a very young age, I was certainly interested in history. My education was at public schools through high school. In college, I pretty much majored in history and anthropology. I still remember when I was about four or five years old on one of the trips that my paternal grandparents took me on. While we were camping at one of those national forest campgrounds, they took me to a place called Bodie, which was considered a ghost town at that point in time. Now it's a state park in California. It was a gold and mining town, late 19th, early 20th century, it might have made it into that. But anyway, from a very young age I remember being fascinated by those who came before us and their story, their legacy that was left behind. In college, I pretty much majored in history. A little poli sci for a short period of time, till I spent one summer lobbying in Washington, DC, and that was enough to say, I don't think I want to do this for the rest of my life. (laughs) So history and anthropology. Study of cultures, people.

Tessa Moening: I love it. (laughs) And where was it that you went to college at?

Phil Young: Well, a number of places. I first started before going into the U.S. Navy. I was at Glendale College, a community college in southern California, right next to Burbank, where I graduated from high school. A couple of my maternal uncles had gone there. I played a little bit of baseball at that point in time and was on the college team. But I went into the navy – it was the Vietnam era – and spent four years in naval aviation. And got out, went back to school. And when I went back to school, I went to school for a while in Denver and their new community college that they were combining with Metro State to [unclear] complex, I think is what it became.

Phil Young: On actually a Vietnam veterans' trip to discuss the fact that so many of us were having drug and alcohol issues, I was introduced to a part of my native state of California, which I subsequently ended up going to the university there. That's Humboldt County, Humboldt State University is where I went. It was famous for the natural resources. Not so much the cultural resources. But it was during a time in the very early '70s when NEPA [National Environmental Policy Act] was new and what we now think of as cultural resource management type work was just starting to be recognized as going to be available. After getting my bachelor's degree, when I started doing graduate work in the resource planning and interpretation school, I was the only cultural person there. Everybody else was forestry, fishery and wildlife and the natural sciences. It was a great place to go to school back then.

Tessa Moening: I may be getting ahead of myself a little bit here, but has that been something you've noticed in your career at all, being the only cultural resources type of person?

Phil Young: No. (laughs)

Tessa Moening: Or is that not something that you really – you haven't. Okay, that's good.

Phil Young: No. It hasn't, in a lot of places that I worked, because I did have a degree in history, there were often other historians or anthropologists or archeologists around. Even before I went to work for the park service, well, stepping back just a moment, even before I went on to Humboldt State to finish my education, I'm going to refer back to a Yosemite experience which is famous in the history of the National Park Service now at least the latter part of the 20th century, and that was the Yosemite riots of Fourth of July weekend, 1970.

Phil Young: When I got out of the navy, I stayed locally, briefly, working for the telephone company, which was kind of the family business. As it turns out, not only was my father working for the phone company, but subsequently both of my sisters did at some point in time, my future father-in-law, mother-in-law. Just about everybody did. (laughter) Well, I spent my time there. And of course, there were, some of the family that

was hoping that that was going to be my life's work. But about a month after I got out of the navy, I went to work with them.

Phil Young: And about two weeks after I started work with the telephone company, I think it was Memorial Day weekend, I took a trip up to Yosemite. A lot of my friends, peers, at the time, were going up there to camp. So, I joined them. Yosemite Valley, for young twenty-somethings at the time, was a blast. It was a lot of fun. Not everything being done there, of course, was legal. We certainly overwhelmed the campground. But anyway, we had such a good time that I went back for Fourth of July weekend. Again, some of my same friends. My brother-in-law was a rock musician that had had a gold record about the time I was in Vietnam. He was with a group called the Strawberry Alarm Clock. And they had a real famous song from the late '60s that years later, when I was watching an episode of The Simpsons, first time I'd ever seen The Simpsons, and Homer was trying marijuana, they're playing the song that the Strawberry Alarm Clock got a gold record for, "Incense and Peppermints." But anyway, he was one of my buddies, my brothers going up there.

Phil Young: So yeah, we went back for Fourth of July weekend. Not realizing that we'd become part of park service history. I got there late in the evening; I think it would have been on a Friday evening. They weren't letting anybody into the park at that point in time just because there was no room left at the inn. So myself and many others were just left camping out along the roadside outside the park.

Phil Young: We went in the next morning. You know, paid our entrance fee. In we went. Found our friends in the valley. And the valley was just, well, basically, overstuffed. Too many people were there. I think the campgrounds were supposed to be limited to six campers per site. From what I could see, there were probably 18 to 20 in the tent camping. I can't really speak for the RV side of the campgrounds. But the tent camping areas were just, like I say, overfilled. And besides that, there were thousands and thousands of people that were camping out in a place called Stoneman Meadow. And of course, there was no camping in Stoneman Meadow. But there wasn't much other alternatives for them to go to, because too many people were there.

Phil Young: Early in the day, I remember hearing that there was going to be a free concert up in Tuolumne Meadows that night featuring the Grateful Dead and Santana. And I don't know if that was ever true. I mean, I was kind of suspicious, being a veteran at the time, thinking well that sounds like government misinformation, trying to get people out of Stoneman Meadow up to Tuolumne Meadow. Let's spread them out. Thin them out a little bit.

Phil Young: Tensions were probably growing during the day because there were just too many people and they were not supposed to be camping there in the meadow. Because of my earlier trips with my cousins, and remembering

the fire fall, which by this time, the National Park Service had stopped, there'd been a cessation that it was an unnatural event. The fire fall required on a daily basis for them to burn a big tree and then push the embers out cascading off of Glacier Point.

Phil Young: Well, in my ignorance, I decided the Fourth of July was the perfect time for this veteran to go up to Glacier Point and protest the cessation of the fire fall. But before I left the campground, I took the campground camping permit that my group had with me. Because I had an inkling that I might run into some problems getting back into the valley because of the night before. So, I was actually up at Glacier Point, throwing sparklers off of Glacier Point, in protest of the cessation of the fire fall. I think I was probably chanting "om," too. (laughter) But that came about just because at that point in time, beneath me many thousands of feet, I was watching the beginnings of what was the Yosemite riot of the Fourth of July 1970.

Phil Young: If my memory serves correct, there was a park service patrol vehicle that was burned. It was definitely a night of unrest. The only way I got back to the campground was by showing that campground pass that I had at, at least two different checkpoints. Visually, I still remember seeing park rangers that were wearing hardhats, almost like motorcycle helmet hardhats. A couple of them had axe handles. So, they were prepared for problems. But I wasn't going to give them any. I was just trying to get back to the campground. Showed my pass and back I went. I believe I slept in a hammock that night. There were probably 18 or 20 of us at our campsite, which looked typical. And in the morning, we were pretty much awakened, I was going to be leaving that day anyway because I had to get back to work at the phone company for Monday. But we were basically told first thing in the morning as we were getting up that the campground was going to be closed down. There were deputy sheriffs from the surrounding counties that had been deputized as rangers since it's a national park there. We were all, you know, informed to leave as soon as we could round up our things and go. So, I probably left an hour or two earlier that day than I would have. But happy to go at that point in time.

Phil Young: Because even the evening before, I can remember thinking as I was watching this riot start to evolve in front of me, that this is not the kind of place that should be having riots. While I was in Vietnam, in *Time* magazine I'd read about Woodstock the summer before. And I'd heard about and read about some of the social unrest and riots that occurred in People's Park in Berkeley. And I thought, well, maybe city streets, but this is a national park, a very special place. Even though I wasn't in the park service and really didn't know about national park status at the time, I knew enough that I said this is not the place for this kind of activity and social unrest to be happening here.

Phil Young: So, I went back that morning and went back to work. Worked for the phone company a few more months and decided I really wanted to go back to school fulltime and further my studies in history and anthropology.

Partially, I think, due to the fact that I did pick Humboldt State, I was surrounded by so many people who did study the natural resources that were working summer jobs with the National Park Service or other land-managing agencies, especially the Forest Service, that I got exposure to the different types of sites that were available.

Phil Young: Eventually on a summer trip I can remember participating in a tour of what was then Lehman Caves, the national monument that's now part of Great Basin National Park. I so much enjoyed the tour that the interpreter who led that tour provided for us that I thought well, this wouldn't be a bad summer job.

Phil Young: So, the following year, I applied to, I don't remember how many, quite frankly, 18 places, possibly? Because back then, you could apply to as many parks as you wanted to for seasonal work. You weren't limited. And being a veteran, I had veteran's preference, which I wasn't sure what that meant or what that did. But having a degree in history, I applied to a number of historic areas thinking, well, this might be advantageous to have a degree in history and work at some of these places.

Phil Young: Before that happened, my primary graduate professor was an archeologist and Meso-Americanist. On the way to the Society for American Archeology Conference in Dallas, Texas, that year, this was 1975, I stopped off at Bandelier National Monument in New Mexico. Camped in their campground. Went down to the visitor's center parking area next morning. And lo and behold, as they say, it's all about timing, a lady who was a graduate student in archeology from the University of Pennsylvania had just been driving semi-nonstop from Pennsylvania got to the parking lot about the time I was getting out of my car. She jumps out of her car and yells out, "I'm here for the dig!" (laughter) Very fortuitous because I heard that. Exactly. Ears perk up and everything. Dig? (laughs) I had some time before the SAA conference, and as a grad student, I was always looking for fieldwork. Some experience for the vita. So, you know, she and I ended up in the back country, Alamo Canyon, doing what then was called salvage excavation. It's basically data recovery. Doing excavation, just trying to find about as much information as you can. Usually a shorter, condensed period of time. But at least having something for the record.

Phil Young: We did that for a few weeks. Went to SAA. Then when we got back, I'd been accepted for a seasonal park technician position as a ranger/interpreter at what was then called Custer Battlefield National Monument. Now it's Little Big Horn. The Battle of Little Big Horn occurred there. So, it was the battlefield site and a national cemetery. So, this was in May of 1975. I was approaching Custer Battlefield, driving my Volkswagen van through a thunderstorm. Lo and behold, as I turned up at the bottom of the entrance road, the thunderstorm stopped, and over the gate, the entrance gate, at the boundary of the park was this rainbow. I took that as a positive omen, and it proved to be pretty true.

Phil Young: It had a good staff. Many of them were historians, as you wondered about. The park superintendent was a gentleman by the name of Dick Hart. The chief ranger was Rich Rambur, and he'd worked at a number of parks further west. Post-Yosemite riot, he had been working with the San Diego Police Department and had come into the National Park Service, got recruited in because of his police background and worked at Cabrillo National Monument, where I believe the superintendent Tommy Tucker was noted for his mentorship, identifying good young talent and bringing them in and providing them a nurturing environment in which they could grow their careers. He was one of those.

Phil Young: They had a new 32-hour a week park technician. This was his first permanent assignment. His name was Jim Loach. It would turn out that Jim and I would remain colleagues for decades and decades. He still works for the National Park Service. He's the associate regional director of operations for the Midwest region. He's been doing that for at least a quarter of a century. But this was his first permanent career conditional position. It was my first seasonal position. So, we worked pretty closely together.

Phil Young: Some of the other seasonals that were on temporary assignments were Cliff Nelson, who was a schoolteacher from Montana, who had a degree in history and had taught there in the Montana area, and during his summers worked at various national parks. He came back to Custer Battlefield, Little Big Horn, because of his interest in battle in the area. He would later be identified in the Montana, as far as their profession of educators, as the teacher of the year. I can see how he could do that, because he certainly had a passion for education and outreach. So.

Phil Young: Let's see. The other seasonals, Ron Pyron and Randy Kane all had similar backgrounds academically. Most had degrees in history or minors, or at least a strong interest in the subject matter.

Phil Young: It was 1975 and that was, of course, the year before the centennial of the Battle of Little Big Horn was going to occur. So, we were starting to prepare for that. Something that occurred early on that I didn't know how it was going to affect my career in the future, was the day that Jim Loach said, "Come on with me!" We just drove down to the maintenance area, took out a revolver – I'd never fired a revolver in my life at that point – and basically put me through a qualifications course. The park service had at that point in time to, you know, qualify with a firearm, should I need to use it. I didn't carry it on duty or anything.

Phil Young: But the following spring, I was sent to a special 100-hour, it was a two-week long course at the newly opening Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Glencoe, Georgia. They called it seasonal law enforcement, and graduates of that were going to be seasonal park rangers. Couldn't carry firearms because there had been so much in the way of intelligence that came in via FBI offices that were hearing that the American Indian

Movement potentially was planning or allegedly planning violent actions, possibly even including blowing up visitor's centers at places like Mount Rushmore and Custer Battlefield. The decision was made to get my position certified, qualified, with the seasonal law enforcement commission, in addition to the other duties that I had.

Phil Young: Getting a little bit ahead of myself. In '75, I still wasn't sure that I was going to be working for the park service beyond just the first three months. But I had several other options that I was looking at doing, potentially teaching or potentially going back into the navy, driving jets, as I sometimes call it. But there was a maintenance employee there by the name of Sam Birdinground. Sam was a member of the Whistling Water Clan of the Crow Nation, and he sponsored me through their, it was three nights and two days, a sun dance. And I participated in that, seeking my path. And at the end of that, pretty much decided I wanted to pursue the path of protecting that which we'd been given by the everywhere spirit, to put it in that type of frame. The park service looked like something I wanted to do, that would be right for me. Much more than the other options were at that point in time. Take any warrior spirit I had as a protector.

Phil Young: That next winter, I went back to Humboldt. Took as many of the natural resource classes as I could real quick. But then as I mentioned, went to FLETC for the two-week course that spring. Immediately after, following that, went back to Custer Battlefield and went to work for the summer.

Phil Young: In June of that year, on June 25th, was the centennial celebration. We had the chief historian for the park service as the keynote speaker. His name was Bob Utley, Robert Utley. He had been a seasonal at Custer Battlefield. He had written books on the Plains Indian Wars. Was considered an expert in that field of history. He was coming out.

Phil Young: Well, at the same time, we were getting more and more information about potential violence that could occur. One of the projects I got involved with was trying to find a fitting memorial that would have a native American presence or essence to it. Because most of the memorials around the battlefield were those for the Seventh Cavalry, the troopers that fell here and there. They did have some signage that indicated that some of the Indian combatants, where they had fallen. But not a lot.

Phil Young: There were a couple of us, Mary Ann Peckham, who was a seasonal at the time, and myself. And I found a quote in *Black Elk Speaks* that Black Elk had supposedly said, that was, "Know the power that is peace." So, we took that quote, we got it translated back into Oglala Sioux, which Black Elk was. So, in English, and in Oglala, on the outside of the visitor's center, is that phrase. That was installed. And as part of the centennial celebration, we got Frank Fools Crow who was an Oglala holy man, who was a spiritual heir from Black Elk on down. With his eagle feather fan, he blessed the installation just before the centennial.

Tessa Moening: So, there was support for that.

Phil Young: Oh, yeah. There was definitely support. But at least from a lot of sectors of the communities, the group known as "Custer Buffs" didn't like it much. They wrote letters directly to the park. They wrote a number of congressional letters. They're pointing out that Black Elk had been a warrior participant who fought against the United States Army. He was a 13 year-old boy at the time. Yeah, he had participated. He was young. Part of his evolution in growing up. But anyway, yeah, it was one of the things that made me feel good about being there at that point in time.

Phil Young: I still have a photo of the celebration with me in summer uniform carrying a wreath in front of the entourage. Robert Utley, the keynote speaker was going down towards the National Cemetery where we were going to be having the ceremony. And I know that some people feel that the American Indian Movement and Russell Means, who is a spokesman for that group, very high visibility and high profile at that point in time, kind of diminished the celebration because of the fear of violence that was so prevalent. As the procession was getting ready to start, I still remember looking around seeing a lot of these Native American men surrounding the group that all had blankets wrapped up. We'd been made so paranoid, I was wondering okay, what's under those blankets? Is this Wounded Knee in reverse? But obviously it wasn't. Everything turned out okay. And I think it was just one piece in a continuing long trail towards progress in that area.

Phil Young: I was happy to read earlier this year in a newspaper article that there's finally a formal Indian memorial to their participants that died there. It was decades in the development because so much consultation was needed to ascertain which individual of this name, which often there's duplicate names that run deep in the same family, if not other families. But anyway, it was good to read that there was finally an Indian memorial, and I'm looking forward to going back and visiting that.

Phil Young: It was also, you know, interesting working in a place that had a national cemetery to it. And the national cemetery had some participants of the battle that were there, like Major Marcus Reno was eventually re-interred there. But a lot of the forts from the Northern Plains, when they were shut down, their interments were relocated to there. So, it was a great place for interpretation, to give programs where you could actually get out and go around and talk about different facets of westward expansion and the impacts that it had.

Tessa Moening: Right. Yeah.

Phil Young: Yeah. It was a very interesting place to work then. From there, I went, after 1976, in the fall of '76, I went to Death Valley for what we called the winter seasonal position and worked there throughout that late fall, through the winter, then into early spring. Primarily doing education and interpretation. Yeah. Got to work, again, with some really good

individuals. That would have been the case where, I would think, okay, yeah, one's a geologist and another one is a biologist. There were two of us that were historians, and there were many historians up at Scotty's Castle at the other end of the park. I happened to have been at headquarters. I kind of lucked out. I got to meet some of the other seasonal protection rangers at the time. I just was coming from having my first season of having a seasonal protection commission. And Dennis Burnett, who's here at this Rendezvous, and Dale Antonich, were two seasonals that were working at Death Valley at the time – and they had, for several years before that. So, I got to know them, and that was, you know, a great experience.

Phil Young: Dennis has much more knowledge of this than I do. But it was during that year when I was there, during that season while I was there, the year that I was there, there was this funky movie being made that we were all sure was a grade B Japanese sci-fi type flick. It just looked funky to us. Lo and behold, it was the first *Star Wars* movie. Dennis will tell you that he and George Lucas are just like that now. (laughter) As a protection ranger, there's always a ranger on duty whenever they were at a film site to make sure that there wasn't resource damage and be there in consultation. Yeah, I remember when that was going on. It seemed some of the elephants that were getting dressed up to be different things, some of the park employees' dependents, their children, being made into the small munchkin type. I don't know if those were wookies or what they were. But anyway, they were all part of the movie. It was kind of an interesting time to be there.

Phil Young: As far as resource issues, we were battling burros. I still remember the controversy between the burro protectionists, and those who wanted the burros removed from Death Valley just because it's – I don't know if you've been there, but it's a very fragile and immense environment. At least from the east side of the park, the burros had been removed during World War Two because it provided meat to the internment camp. So, we didn't have burro issues there. But in the west mountains, which was a much bigger mountain range, as I recall, burros were still an issue, and they would really pollute water holes and springs. They were a problem.

Phil Young: Well, I remember once driving a park vehicle over towards Lone Pine. I was going to Lone Pine. And there was some wrangler who had his pickup truck with a trailer and with carrots. He was trying to entice a burro onto the trailer. I stopped and identified myself. And told him, "Unfortunately, this is a national monument. This is considered wildlife. They're protected. You can't take one. But tell you what I'll do. If you'll take two—" I stopped it right there and said, "No, I'm just kidding. I'm just kidding. You can't." He got the picture. I didn't have a commission and didn't at that point in time even think about writing a violation notice. Because I didn't have one. (laughter) I didn't have the authority to issue one, anyway. But it was an educational moment, and I can remember

thinking that sometimes you can have an educational moment without taking enforcement action. You can talk about it. Yeah.

Phil Young: In retrospect, too, in I think it was 1975, it was, I guess I must have had some type of enforcement authority given to me after I went down and fired the revolver. Because I can remember thinking I was so tired of picking up litter that at one point towards the end of the season, it was probably late August, I remember thinking the next person, if I see someone littering, I'm going to write them a ticket.

Phil Young: Within a couple of days, I had my opportunity. Saw someone up at the mass grave on Last Stand Hill, and he was smoking a cigarette. He just threw it down. Litter! Started up the hill towards him. Got halfway there, looked, realized it was Marlon Brando, who was filming the movie *Missouri Breaks* in Montana at the time. In the back of my head there was this little voice saying, "How do you give the Godfather a ticket?" (laughter)

Phil Young: There was another seasonal park ranger who engaged him in conversation about that same time. He got there before even I did. And they ended up talking about the wording on the monument, that the Seventh was involved in this activity in Indian Territory. And Mr. Brando was interested in the concept of Indian Territory, and what that would have meant for that period of time.

Tessa Moening: Right. So, he didn't get a ticket?

Phil Young: Oh, no, no. Oh, no, no, no. No, no.

Tessa Moening: Can't do that. (laughter)

Phil Young: No, I didn't do that. No. Death Valley, I worked through the winter and early spring. And then had another temporary, seasonal position waiting for me up at what was then Mount McKinley National Park. Now, Denali. It was a good experience. There I was going to be a patrol ranger. Park technician, but primarily doing protection duties.

Tessa Moening: Mm hmm. And that's what you were starting to get more interested in at that point?

Phil Young: Um, well, yeah, because I wanted to diversify my portfolio. (laughs) And I'll tell you that still most of my duties to that point in time had been giving interpretive programs.

Tessa Moening: At that point, how did you envision your career progressing?

Phil Young: I really wasn't sure, but I thought I was going into some type of resource management. Certainly, strong on the cultural end of things because that was where I had the greatest knowledge base and experience. All along, too, I should mention that Custer and Death Valley, my future spouse was visiting. We were developing our relationship. She first rode the train from southern California to Billings, Montana, for a couple of weeks visit.

Phil Young: Then while she was in school and I was in Death Valley, on her weekends she'd come out and visit. Occasionally, I'd go into the Los Angeles area and visit. Well, at Mount McKinley, she got a job with the concessionaire as well. As it turns out, my roommate with the Park Service, his spouse was her roommate at the lodge at the concessionaire down the hill. Mount McKinley has some really great memories for us. The blueberries – going outside your tent cabin and everything was blueberry for a while. Blueberry cookies, blueberry pancakes blueberry, you name it.

Phil Young: Of course, the grizzly bears realized that, too. I still remember a time that Meme and I were in the cabin and we heard something on the front porch. We had a loft in our tent cabin. We looked down and there was a grizzly bear kind of looking in there at us, you know, looking through the front door.

Tessa Moening: (laughs) Yikes.

Phil Young: He went on. But most of the issues having to do with bears while I was there was with photographers getting too close to the bear. Or in one case that I remember, we did a long medical transport to get them out to where they could be airlifted into Fairbanks because he'd gotten between a couple of cubs and the sow, and her mom. Well, he was trying to take closer and closer photos of the cubs. Mom didn't put up with that. It was usually doing dumb stuff that got people in trouble, just like today.

Phil Young: That was a good experience up there. I worked for a really good district ranger, Bob Geabhart, who ended up spending decades as an Alaska ranger; went on into park management, all up there.

Tessa Moening: So, your wife's been supportive of your park service career?

Phil Young: For the most part. We've run into issues at times. It would have been nice if she could have worked at the park. But the park manager for one reason or another had a no-dual-career policy. He would not hire a spouse. He had in the past in a couple of cases and it didn't work out. But for the most part.

Tessa Moening: Okay. That's something she would have pursued if she had the opportunity, but it just didn't—

Phil Young: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Her background was in geology, and she did work at two areas that I'll be talking about that I worked. She worked for the Forest Service at the same time at the same location. So, we've managed to work it out. But it hasn't been as easy as maybe it should have been. But we're here.

Phil Young: Yeah. Mount McKinley. Oh, the superintendent then was Dan Kuehn, and I just mention that because he's going to be my superintendent later in my career, too.

Tessa Moening: Oh, okay.

Phil Young: Just the way things work.

Tessa Moening: It comes back around. (laughs)

Phil Young: Oh, yeah. They do. The Association of National Park Rangers, I remember hearing about the very first Rendezvous. But of course, I was a young seasonal and I don't believe I was in a place where I could have even attended, because I believe it was when I was up at Mount McKinley. I was gainfully employed, and it would have been a long way to come. And besides, I generally didn't take a lot of annual leave during my season. I was there to often try and backfill for permanent employees who were going to be taking or helping them with the busyness of the season. So, I was there for, not really a long season. But it wasn't a short season, either. I think I was on board there from about mid-May to the end of September.

Phil Young: Then I was actually on my way back to Death Valley for another winter season when I got a call while I was in Portland, Oregon, and offered a career conditional position. And I jumped at it, of course.

Tessa Moening: Absolutely.

Phil Young: It was the Tonto National Monument in central Arizona. An archeological site. Many of my colleagues and peers were seasonals trying to make the jump to career conditional park service positions at that point in time, often were having to take jobs at either Independence Hall, Jefferson Expansion Memorial in Saint Louis, or Golden Gate, leading tours of Alcatraz. When I got to Tonto there in the Tonto Basin with three wilderness areas around me, I felt that I'd landed in the briar patch. Wow, I really lucked out! (laughter)

Tessa Moening: Absolutely.

Phil Young: It was a good first assignment. Not always the most active of places. When I first got the job offer, I was thinking well, this is fortuitous. Tonto. A dog that I'd raised as a puppy, his name was Tonto, and he made the cover of *Sports Illustrated* when I was like 13 years old. (laughter) I said, this could be good. Well, obviously they're hiring me because I've got the proper background. I've got archeology in my background, so that must be it. Only to find out when I got there after a month or so they were talking about the fact that I was number three on their certification, number one had been a 10-point vet who had taken a job just weeks before back in Guilford Courthouse in North Carolina. And number two who was ahead of me on the OPM cert was still a seasonal, but he had just recently while he was at Carlsbad Caverns streaked naked through the housing area. The park superintendent at Tonto didn't like the sound of that. He didn't want to go there. (laughter)

Tessa Moening: Can't blame him, I suppose.

Phil Young: He was the son of a Presbyterian minister, and he just didn't think that was probably the right activity to be going on in his park. His name was Jim Valder and the ranger was Jim Troutwine. Both of them had worked at Grand Canyon immediately before coming to Tonto.

Phil Young: Tonto had its busier seasons, which was definitely spring. Winter and spring, actually. And it's slow season. There were days in summer, and certainly days where we didn't see anybody, except locals. Because it was so hot. I used to describe it as "80 miles and 80 years northeast of Phoenix."

Phil Young: One of the opportunities that we had when we were there is to get to know, on the forest, there was a fire lookout up at Aztec Peak. He was a well-known writer of the Southwest, Ed Abbey, Edward Abbey. He'd written *Desert Solitaire, The Monkey Wrench Gang,* many other environmental books. So, it was at least once a season, usually twice a season, we'd hike up to Aztec Peak, visit him. Our second year there we kind of realized this is probably going to be Ed's last season here, because too many people are starting to discover that he was up there. That was certainly a good experience.

Phil Young: While we were at Tonto, also, Dave Foreman who worked for the Wilderness Society left the Wilderness Society and was starting a brand-new organization called Earth First! He traveled the Tonto Basin to recruit Meme and I into Earth First! You know we didn't take a lot of discussion. Meme and I realized well, for someone who's trying to develop a park service career, this is probably not the organization I should be associated with. So, we wished Dave well and he went on and Earth First! became pretty well known for some of their activities.

Phil Young: Meme and I also got married at the visitor center. As far as we could tell from the unofficial administrative history at that point in time, it was probably the first wedding that had occurred there in hundreds of years. Since when it wasn't an archeological site, I'm sure. (laughter) And that was home, home village and pueblo to people. I'm sure that there were marriages. Well, we were the first modern one. It was on a beautiful spring day. And it was after a winter of significant rainfall that had occurred, so the hillside behind us was just covered with lupine and poppies and clover. Yeah, it was gorgeous. Nice day. Nice event. So that place has always been special to us. And we've gone back several times.

Phil Young: I have family that lives down in the Phoenix area. In fact, I'll be there next weekend.

Tessa Moening: Oh. Busy. (laughs)

Phil Young: Mom's 90th birthday and an uncle's 80th birthday. We're combining the celebrations between their actual birthdays. If I get the time I'll probably go out and visit Tonto. See the park. See how it's changed.

Tessa Moening: Yeah.

Phil Young: They all change a little, even though we're there to protect and preserve, they all change a little.

Tessa Moening: Oh, I bet. Yeah.

Phil Young: One of the things I remember wanting to do at that point in time, to talk about the future. What was I going to do in the park service in the future? I was thinking about cultural resource protection. That's kind of what I was hoping my calling might be, if I was ever going to have an area of expertise. Even though I was an outspoken believer in the generalist ranger. That besides being an interpreter, you should be a protector, and as part of protector, you know, besides that law enforcement commission, I also started getting involved in wildland fire, because we were surrounded by the Tonto National Forest. And Meme worked at the Tonto Basin Ranger District Office just about three miles down the road from the monument. So, we had fire going. I also got an EMT course to come and be taught there at the visitor center for the surrounding community. There were about a dozen of us that got EMT certifications. Some of the county sheriffs and some of the forest service employees and it was a good interagency cooperative effort. There was actually a Department of Public Safety paramedic was our instructor. He worked on one of the Life Flight helicopters. He'd come and teach the sessions. About a dozen of us got certified as EMTs. It's all just part of my beliefs that rangers should be able to do it all, kind of like Stephen T. Mather said we should. Whatever you have, "call a ranger." That's right. Let's do that.

Phil Young: So that was pretty much, I spent four years at Tonto. Or close to four years. And then got a supervisory position at Jean Lafitte down in southern Louisiana. I remember we moved in early August, and by the time we hit central Texas and the humidity hit me around Austin, I was, "What is this?!"

Tessa Moening: Yeah. I bet, having been out west for so long.

Phil Young: Yeah. After being down there in New Orleans for a couple of weeks, my low point was thinking, "what have I done just to get a promotion?"

Tessa Moening: Yeah. (laughs)

Phil Young: There was a lot of litter around town. And the environment. Yeah, it was hot and humid. But it was brutal. But it worked out. It got to the point where I was there for just 20 months before I moved on to my next park, but I really got to enjoy it, especially when the weather changed. I mean, I'd never lived in a place where they'll party for any different number of reasons, and one of them is the end of "sweat season." So, by now, we'd be partying hearty, usually early October. I worked for some good people there. Jim Isinegle was the park superintendent. He had come out of a landscape architect background. But he was the first one who really opened my eyes to the importance of collaboration with partners. In a park like Jean Lafitte, that makes a lot of sense. Because you've got a lot of potential partners in the area. I did some things unconsciously at Tonto, such as the EMT training and getting that done. But you know, that was more of, yeah, it as the local community. But it was Forest Service and

sheriff's office as well. At Jean Lafitte, it was a much larger collaboration and partnership. Very fertile field that was there.

Phil Young: The historian I worked for at my unit, Will Green, had his bachelor's in history at Florida State, and his masters under T. Harry Williams at LSU [Louisiana State University]. So, he came as a Civil War historian that he'd come down from Fredericksburg and had worked for the Park Service there. And was my supervisor there at Jean Lafitte, the Chalmette area, where the Battle of New Orleans was fought.

Phil Young: I remember some of the events we got involved in had to do with the anniversary of the Battle of New Orleans. Where Andrew Jackson and many others, his army of volunteers and militia, basically repulsed and just really obliterated the British army. Of course, was marching across this open field into cannon fire, (laughter) and didn't fare very well for them. But got to learn a little more about special events and management of same, which was going to certainly pay me dividends with some of the other parks that I was going to work at.

Tessa Moening: Were a lot of the collaborative efforts that you undertook at that time historical events with the community, or what kind of collaborations did you do?

Phil Young: That's a good question. (laughs) We were kind of the new kid in town. Chalmette had been a national historical park and they were well known in the Saint Bernard Parish. In fact, there was a volunteer group, I'll call it a friends group because many of them who were, they were called the Little Colonels and they were high school age young ladies who wore antebellum hoop skirts and talked about ladies' fashions in the earlier part of the 19th century. I'd say they became a friends group because by the time I got there, some of them were third generation. Their grandmother had been Little Colonels, their mom the same. (laughter) So there was this strong interest in keeping something like that going.

Phil Young: But in other aspects, especially with our units downtown in the French Quarter, there were other organizations that had been the only ones that had been providing a certain historic tour of the cemeteries – the historic cemeteries in New Orleans get a lot of visitor and tourist interest. But these were paid tours, so we didn't want to infringe on them. So, the partnership became where we could identify where we would not be competing with them, and we'd go into other areas and augment what they were doing.

Phil Young: A lot of times our partnerships got directed by the political realities that we were faced with. We wanted to keep the constituents of the local congressional representatives happy.

Tessa Moening: Yeah. So that meant doing things like not interfering with private businesses. (laughs)

Phil Young: Yeah. We wouldn't want to do the same tour for free. So, we were certainly doing things that would be an additional offering to the palette of the multiculture and colors that New Orleans is famous for. After I'd been there about half a year, I started to really appreciate it more and more. It really grew on me. After 20 months, again I left for another promotion, (laughs) and I was somewhat sad to leave. Because there was a lot of positive things to be said about the New Orleans area. And I'll talk about it in the future, too. I got asked to go back twice after I left. One, to help the U.S. Attorney's office in what became probably my most significant contribution to the park service – was that of being a regional special agent who developed an expertise in archeological theft and investigations. The U.S. Attorney's Office would eventually ask me to come back and help with some of their theft investigations from the historic cemeteries. But that's later.

Tessa Moening: Okay, we'll get there. (laughs)

Phil Young: That's later. So, after Jean Lafitte – no, still want to stay with Jean Lafitte because we're here at the Association of National Park Rangers Rendezvous. The first attempted Rendezvous that I tried to get to was while I was at Jean Lafitte. And I almost got there. But much like the Donner Party—(laughter)

Tessa Moening: That's ominous.

Phil Young: I got snowed in in the Sierras.

Tessa Moening: (laughs) Oh, no.

Phil Young: And Meme and I decided, you know what? We're not going to go to Rendezvous, obviously. We could have gone, but we would have had to have done a big, big drive around. So subsequently, the next year, when Ranger Rendezvous was at Great Smoky Mountains, Fontana Village there in the Southeast, and with us living in New Orleans, it was our first Ranger Rendezvous experience. Finally got to one.

Tessa Moening: Yeah. (laughs)

Phil Young: Didn't get snowed out. So that's the first time I got to meet another future mentor of mine, Rick Gale, who's a long-time president of this association, and a very active supporter of not just ANPR but the young rangers coming up through the system and all. I'm sure I'll mention him in a little bit, too. Because I'm going to be working for him directly as my supervisor after my next park.

Phil Young: My next park was Fort Laramie. That was in, of course, southeast Wyoming. I was there from March of 1983 until December of 1984, another 20-month assignment. Probably too short. But in retrospect, much like Jean Lafitte, I was thinking, well, it's probably better to be there too short a time than too long a time.

Tessa Moening: (laughs) That's true.

Phil Young: Keep it fresh and active and positive. Fort Laramie was a lot of fun. We did active camps of military instruction, which sounds interesting, and it was. It was a for-credit course through the University of Wyoming, where gentlemen and ladies got to basically learn about what it would have been like to have lived out there by living it. Just for one week. (laughter) We didn't have a time machine or anything. But we left them out there in 1876 and they couldn't come back. It was a good course and it was a lot of fun. I got to meet other people that I worked with. Gary Howe was the superintendent. He was there obviously before I got there, and he was there for part of the time after I got there.

Phil Young: A couple of the chief historians that I worked for were Mike Livingston and John Burns. And I still keep in touch with John. John is retired in the Gettysburg, Pennsylvania area. He was a great guy. Still is. Still is.

Phil Young: It was also while we were at Fort Laramie that we celebrated the birth of our only son. Only child. So just for that reason alone, I'll always have great memories. Plus, cold winters. I remember one day that Meme and I were jogging along, and it was probably 15 below. But we had all sorts of layers. Lots of layers. Some guy pulls over in his pickup truck and asks, "You guys need any help?"

Phil Young: "No, we're fine. We're fine."

Tessa Moening: So, the work you were doing at that point is still primarily interpreting cultural resources?

Phil Young: Actually, if you look at my position description from the time, even though I was the highest graded position there that had a law enforcement commission, nobody in that position before or after had law enforcement commission. The title of my position was chief of interpretation.

Tessa Moening: Okay.

Phil Young: So, yes. But I got involved in an ARPA investigation. The Archeological Resource Protection Act of 1979 had come about while I was working at Tonto. There was a National Guard camp in Guernsey, the next community west of Fort Laramie, and when there'd been a guardsman who had visited the park and kicked up a portion of a revolver from the ground, that had recently become exposed, at least we theorized recently, probably from the Laramie River action. Probably just wandered down, looked, saw it. Typical crime of opportunity, which most of them are, and he took it back to the camp.

Phil Young: Well, word got back to us. So, we started an investigation and I didn't realize it at this point in time how important ARPA would become in my life. I often look back and, in the future, would say, "ARPA has been very, very good to me."

Phil Young: We went to the commanding officer of the base, told him about the incident. He checked into it, and it was resolved non-judiciously. He didn't get a violation notice. We got the item back along with, this is

where it came from. And I'm sure that through his own military system he was probably disciplined in some way. Since there was the violation. And most commanding officers don't like that kind of attention for their unit, you know.

Phil Young: So, at Fort Laramie, I remember seeing a vacancy announcement. It was for a supervisory park ranger job in Santa Monica Mountains. There was no information. Meme and I were both raised in that area, and it was where our Malibu kennel had been was surrounded by the Santa Monica Mountains, everything behind us, away from the ocean.

Phil Young: So, I applied. And I didn't know what my chances were. But as it turned out, Jim Loach, who was that first supervisor, his first career position there at Little Big Horn was very good friends with the chief ranger at Santa Monica Mountains. One Richard T. Gale, Rick Gale. And Rick was one of the founders of the Association of National Park Rangers. Jim had become very active by that time. Jim was certainly a mentor of mine from the time that I left Little Big Horn. Even when I was at Tonto, he was at Lake Mead. And Meme and I would meet him and his wife sometimes on camping trips. Places that were halfway between Lake Mead, where he was, and Tonto. But Jim put in some good words for me. I didn't have nearly the type of protection background that was really needed.

Phil Young: I still remember my first day in Rick Gale's office, with him saying, "You've got some pretty big moccasins to fill here." Because it was Dale Antonich, that seasonal that I knew from Death Valley days, who had worked at a number of areas as a protection ranger. And I knew that I wasn't going to be able to fill them.

Phil Young: So, I immediately said, "Well, I hope that I can tread my own path for you," and it'll be a good one. And it turns out that it did work out.

Phil Young: As I mentioned, he was a significant supporter of rangers developing their ranger skills. You know, there'd been a course called Ranger Skills, which I'd not gotten to. I'd applied when I was at Tonto. But my supervisor at the time just didn't feel that there was a need to go. So, I found out secondhand from him later that he hadn't submitted my application. He promised me he would, but he didn't.

Phil Young: Anyway, at Santa Monica Mountains working for Rick Gale was a real ranger skills factory. I got involved in a couple of search and rescue operations. I got involved in a lot more fire than I thought I ever would. Right out of the chute, my very first month, this Regional Special Events Team was mobilized, because the flame of the Statue of Liberty was flown from New York into Los Angeles International Airport. It was going to be part of the Hilton float for the Rose Parade. Because this was during a very significant fundraising event for the restoration of the Statue of Liberty, that Lee Iacocca was involved in it. It was just a very big financial effort.

Phil Young: So, I hadn't even been there for four weeks yet. I remember starting out on New Year's Eve in Pasadena guarding the flame from the Statue of Liberty on New Year's Eve and New Year's morning, waiting for the parade to begin.

Tessa Moening: Wow. (laughs)

Phil Young: The experience with the Special Events Team the whole time that that flame was there was certainly a good one.

Phil Young: The next fire season was the first that I'd been at in a number of years that had active potential for my involvement. The bottom line is that I got experience being a medical unit leader. I got to the point where I asked Rick if I could also see about becoming a safety officer, which I did in 1987. He was very supportive of that. We were fortunate in that our dispatch office was the Angeles National Forest. They had the South Zone Training Center. So, all of Southern California fire agencies would be training. And I, over the course of the four years that I was there, I went to numerous courses. Got to see Jim Loach, people like Paul Anderson that were at Yosemite at the time, would come in and we'd be in similar courses. I got the opportunity to get a lot of experiences that are valuable to me even to this day.

Phil Young: Then in 1987, became a safety officer. I've been doing that, still do that. '87 was also the first time that I was basically a safety officer on an Incident Management Team, when a big Type 1 fire, a complex of fires, actually, in northern California. I've had an interest in incident management growing through the decades since that point in time. Yeah.

Phil Young: Let's see. Other things. Another experience that I remember, while I was at Santa Monica Mountains, is William Penn Mott, who was the director of the National Park Service; I remember when he was appointed. He had been President Ronald Reagan's director of the California state park system when Reagan had been governor of California. Mott was an interesting character. I think he'd appreciate that term. He was involved in the planning stages for a number of presidential sites. One I think was a potential Gerald Ford birthplace site. And the other that had some merit to it was the Richard N. Nixon birthplace site there in Yorba Linda. The house Nixon was born in, he was born in the bedroom in this house that was still there, intact. The furnishings from that era were going to be made available by the family.

Phil Young: But I was Mr. Mott's driver for a day when Dan Kuehn, the superintendent of Santa Monica Mountains, I'd worked with or under, up at Mount McKinley years before, the three of us went out and looked at this property. I got picked, I think, because I was the district ranger for the east district properties. And that was certainly east of the park. So out we went. It looked feasible, but I remember at lunch Mr. Mott stating that he was really going to try to establish a policy where the park service did not get saddled with any living presidents' birthplaces or memorials, because

there was just too much family pressure. I hearkened back to remembering that Jim Valder, when he was superintendent at Tonto, talking about the fact that when he did a special event assignment as a ranger over to the Lyndon B. Johnson Boyhood Home site there in Texas, Johnson City. But from that experience, he remembered the influences that Johnson had directly on the management of the site.

Phil Young: There would be things like LBJ would say, "The grass is getting a little long here. I'll send my guys over to mow the lawn." And he would. But he'd also send an invoice for services and bill the National Park Service for it later on. (laughter) And hearing about Lady Bird not wanting certain types of interpretive historic accuracies because it painted Lyndon as being from a much more modest background. Which he was. So, she wanted it changed a little bit so that, you know, people would think they had indoor plumbing at a time that they didn't. So, I can appreciate where William Penn Mott didn't want to have additional sites coming in with that generation of the family still around, saying, "This is how we want it done."

Phil Young: What eventually occurred at that site, of course, is Nixon's presidential library. I think that's a good compromise. Good way to go. My understanding is the house is still there. Library's there.

Phil Young: Horace Albright was still alive, the second director of the National Park Service. He was living in a home close to Santa Monica Mountains. One of my real thrills and joys was getting to help, and I'll use the word "care," because he was really frail. And his bodily functions were failing him, but his mind was still sharp. He was in his nineties. I remember driving him or helping him around inside our ranger station. Some of his memories were amazing for someone of his age. And here I was thinking, he's our second director and I think he was probably the first park service superintendent of Yellowstone. Yeah.

Tessa Moening: Yeah. It would be interesting to hear his perspective.

Phil Young: At this Rendezvous, there are several books that are being auctioned as a fundraiser that came from his personal library. When asked of the donor, "How did you get those?" he fessed up to he married Horace Albright's granddaughter.

Tessa Moening: Oh. (laughs) I guess that would do it.

Phil Young: That's legit. But, yes, Santa Monica Mountains actually gave us a real good chance to be at home with our young son with our parents. He got to know both sets of grandparents. They were all alive at that point in time, so he still has memories of them. It was a good thing.

Phil Young: Certainly, for my experience in law enforcement and fire, I'd mentioned managing special events. There's a thing called the Renaissance Pleasure Fair that happens, it was really big back then, in northern California and southern. The same organization that would be putting it on in both places

would just migrate, depending on the time of the year. At Santa Monica Mountains, we acquired, one of our properties was the old Paramount Ranch, the old Paramount movie ranch. The actual Renaissance Pleasure Fair was on property adjacent to Paramount movie ranch, which made for an ideal parking lot. So basically, we were used as a parking and ingress and egress area. People would go into the Renaissance Pleasure Fair, drink ale all day, eat their turkey legs, watch the jousting events, and then come back out into the parking lot and try to drive home. (laughter) Yeah. A lot of them didn't get home. We started having to do interdictions. There were mass field sobriety tests at certain points. I mean, to this day I still remember the very first weekend of the first Renaissance Fair that I worked seeing, it was bumper to bumper traffic as they were trying to all leave at the end of the day. There was a good three or four rows of traffic. I can remember seeing a van down there where the driver kept disappearing. He kept falling over. So, I pulled him out, and before I could even start administering the field sobriety test to him, he urinated his pants right in front of me. Anyway, he ended up getting a ride to Los Angeles County Sheriff's Office jail, as did several others.

Phil Young: But the good thing is, as the years progressed, and I was there for four years, and we had the Renaissance Fair every year, issues like that became less and less of a problem. I think we helped get the education. People started to realize oh, there's now law enforcement authority out there in the parking lot, and they won't allow you to hit the road.

Phil Young: There was one individual that I could tell also was under the influence of something, but I didn't know what it was at the time. I pulled him out and he kind of barricaded himself in his vehicle. I just waited him out and waited till I had his registration information. I walked around in front of his vehicle, which probably wasn't a very wise thing to do, in retrospect. But as I walked back, I was watching his eyes track me. Then they started bouncing like a basketball being dribbled. I later learned that that as probably PCP. But I got around to the side, got his information back on who he was, and the fact that he was driving with a suspended license. He attempted to drive over me. And he departed, but he eventually got picked up by California Highway Patrol on a warrant for assault on a federal officer with a deadly weapon. And he paid his dues.

Tessa Moening: Wow. Yeah. (laughs)

Phil Young: And he got sentenced for that. And part of it, too, I remember, was a donation to the park. We were just on the cutting edge of being able to accept donations and had donation funds being set up within our administrative system. And I can remember he made a sizable contribution. I also heard that after he had made that contribution, he had gotten picked up and arrested again because there was still a warrant out for his arrest because they thought that he hadn't complied with that part of it.

Phil Young: I still remember getting a telephone call and saying, "Hey, you can just call Jean Brady down at our headquarters. She administers, basically, those funds. I know I've seen the thank you letter that went to him. So yeah, no problem." (laughter)

Phil Young: One of my achievements that I remember that I'm really proud of was an annual evaluation about the last year that Rick was there. So, it probably would have been for 1987. I had written with a Los Angeles County Fire Department battalion chief a pre-attack plan for the Malibu area that included our properties and, of course, all lands, private property, between Topanga Canyon and Malibu Canyon, because Gary's battalion was in that area. I remember at the annual evaluation Rick Gale making me feel very proud when he said, "No matter what else you do in your career, you should always feel proud of the fact you've been groundbreaking in our relationship with the fire departments here and your efforts you did with Gary Nelson, the battalion chief."

Tessa Moening: Yeah, you're good at collaboration.

Phil Young: It felt so good. And if you thought Jean Lafitte was complex, you should try Santa Monica Mountains. I mentioned I was the district ranger on the east district. So, I had Malibu and Beverly Hills on my district. And I used to say that yeah, our park neighbors not only know how to write their congressman, they know how to take him to lunch and make a big contribution for his reelection. And that was true. So, it was a very politically intense place, but also a very excellent learning environment. Sometimes on what not to do. Often, I was glad that I wasn't the one who did it. I'd observe someone else.

Phil Young: But occasionally I'd be at a meeting and you know, some governmental entity would read something that I had written for our superintendent's signature and it would be used as an example of, "What kind of partnership is this?" Basically, citing federal law. (laughter) Well, yes there is the federal supremacy clause in the Constitution. But sometimes you have to walk softly.

Phil Young: Anyway, I'm very thankful for the opportunities I had. To go home, work in an area where I'd been raised. And, I hope, make a difference.

Phil Young: Towards the end of my tenure at Santa Monica Mountains, while Rick was still there, he had at one point asked me, "You haven't specialized yet?" But he knew that the park could justify a law enforcement specialist position and a fire management officer position. And he and his replacement, who came in behind him, was chief ranger, that was Ernie Quintana, both gave me the opportunity to be the fire management officer and the law enforcement specialist. But I did not want to specialize at that point in time. I said no, I want to be a park ranger. And do both. (laughter) And do both.

Phil Young: Well, we were on the verge my last year there of getting closer and closer to that era of specialization that we certainly have more of now. That would be in 1988 there were the Yellowstone fires. Rick Gale had transferred up to Boise to the National Interagency Fire Center as park service representative. He was the area commander of the Yellowstone fires. He'd been a type 1 incident commander of one the national type 1 Incident Management Teams based in California when he was at Santa Monica Mountains. He was just a step up at this point in time. Because he actually, there was a two-week long course on advanced incident management. And he was part of the cadre that taught that two-week course every other year. An area commander was part of that course as well. So '88 was kind of a landmark year in the professionalization of fire management in the National Park Service, and I was right place, right time. I was the acting chief ranger at Santa Monica Mountains while he departed, and he was up in Idaho. Ernie Quintana wasn't on yet.

Phil Young: I got a chance to have a two-week, or they were three-week assignments at that point in time, twenty-one day assignment in Yellowstone as a safety officer on the North Fork Fire, and see incident management firsthand at that point, and what was going on there at Yellowstone. Yeah, the entire ecosystem was certainly at a point where it was going to burn. It had been several hundred years, over 200 years since it had had a big fire across its landscape, and it was certainly due. And it did. It certainly did.

Phil Young: Towards the end of 1988, again I saw a vacancy announcement. This one was for what was called Ranger Activity Specialist. Park ranger. It would be a promotion for me. No supervisory responsibility. It was in the regional office of the Southwest Region in Santa Fe, and you'd have responsibility for a full group of specialized ranger activities from fee collection to radio management and certainly law enforcement was going to play a role. Fire as well. They were reorganizing. The end results were that I became the deputy regional fire management officer, and I got to be the deputy law enforcement specialist for a park police captain who, when I first got there, had already retired. So, from day one, I got to do that, got to do his job as well.

Phil Young: I was told the very first day in the Santa Fe office, that I was expected to be there for two years. The position was being earmarked upward mobility for a female candidate, because we wanted more and more women to be recruited into the ranger ranks and brought up through the service. And I'd mentioned that Rick was always a great supporter at Santa Monica Mountains, that's true. He was, during my career, the single most active promoter of trying to bring about a diverse workforce that I ever worked for. A lot of women and people of color. Certainly, underrepresented populations that hadn't been part of the ranger workforce before were with us with Santa Monica Mountains, and I know several of them still hold Rick in high esteem. Really give him great thanks for helping us along.

Phil Young: So back at Santa Fe, when I heard that the position I was in, had been actually earmarked for a female candidate, that didn't seem extraordinary to me. It seemed right. In fact, I even asked, "Well, how did I get into this position?" At that point in time, there weren't any candidates that made the cert. They hadn't applied. So, they were going to give it two years and see what happens.

Phil Young: So, I went about the business of trying to do the job to the best of my ability. A lot of that the first year was going to be providing law enforcement refresher training, since we didn't have a regional law enforcement specialist to organize these one-week long courses. So, I ended up coordinating, teaching five or six of those around the region. Also was involved with putting on our regional chief rangers' conference, where every park would be sending one of their chief rangers.

Phil Young: I reorganized our Special Events Teams. Our Special Events Teams in the past had been more law enforcement oriented, which they still are today. But I tried organizing them, even though everybody had a law enforcement commission, everybody also had an Incident Command System duty. The head of the team would be the incident commander. There'd be a logistics chief who would be responsible for a lot of the supplies and materials that they would need. Ground transportation. There would be a medical unit leader who would usually be the most advanced EMT or a park medic, if not a paramedic, and try to identify those positions as well. So, if they went in, they would be fully integrated into the Incident Command System structure.

Phil Young: So that was part of my first two years in the Southwest region I led incident, as far as the Special Events Team, to White Sands, both those first two years, for the Easter weekend, which was basically just a "big kegger" out in the White Sand Dunes. In many ways, it took me back to the Renaissance Pleasure Fair, because at some point in time, the traffic would get so heavy around the loop roads that it would be bumper to bumper traffic. You couldn't tell if people had been drinking or not. It was very hard to tell. But the park was just overrun with too many people. Subsequently the superintendent outlawed the consumption of adult beverages there. I don't know if it's year-round, but certainly that event went away. It really turned a national monument into kind of a big local park recreation area, with the emphasis on potential wreck that could be happening.

Phil Young: In fact, there was a fatality not in the park, but of people who'd been there and left. And probably kept consuming. The fatality was like five, six, seven hours later. So, they'd been out after they'd left the park. But it got us to thinking that no, we don't want to be contributing to this, and it's not what should be happening at a park area.

Phil Young: Again, the Association of National Park Rangers was certainly part of my life at that point in time. Besides going to rendezvouses when I was at

Santa Monica Mountains, I continued to go. One of my office mates was the regional Fire Management Officer, Cliff Chetwin, and we worked together on the fire program. He still goes to Ranger Rendezvouses just about every year. He's here at this one with his wife Judy. They're both park service retirees.

Phil Young: And after being in that position for a couple of years like I was supposed to be, something that was going to change my future life occurred. And that was, I thought I was going to be groomed, I'd been told, "You're being groomed to be a chief ranger. Look at all the parks here in the Southwest region where you'd like to be chief ranger after two years. And out you'll go as a chief ranger." I figured after a chief ranger, I'd heard that the regional director, John Cook, was supportive of me, and maybe park superintendent. That had pretty much been my career goal and path. Even though during some of the darker times, I was thinking gosh darn, I'll be lucky to make a GS-9 sub district ranger before I retire, because it was slow going, for three years as a GS-4 park technician and 5 for a couple of years. This, that, and the other thing.

Phil Young: Anyway, vacancy announcement came out. The park service was establishing a special agent program, and the first vacancy announcement was out and it was for the special agent in El Paso at EPIC, the El Paso Intelligence Center, that was going to be involved in the drug wars and the border initiative. The selecting official was my boss, the chief ranger, who wanted me to vacate the position so he can fill it. And I often say, affirmative action worked for me.

Phil Young: So, I talked to him about it and said, "You know, I just don't know if that's my cup of tea. My wife's sister lives in El Paso, and it would be nice for a family thing."

Phil Young: He said, "Well, I'll tell you what. Pretty soon, in a matter of about six weeks, we're going to be announcing another special agent position here in Santa Fe that's going to join the ARPA Task Force."

Phil Young: My jaw dropped. "What's that?" (laughs)

Phil Young: "Well, the Archeological Resources Protection Act Task Force. Interagency effort."

Phil Young: What I didn't know was about a year or two before, actually he'd been the regional chief ranger up in Alaska when John Cook was the regional director up in Alaska. When John Cook came down to the Southwest, Bill came with him. Actually, I guess maybe Bill's position might have even been regional law enforcement specialist. But anyway, Bill came with him from Alaska. Bill had looked around town in Santa Fe and noticed all of these types of artifacts and Indian materials that were being offered for sale in galleries that were often suspicious. They easily could be tribal sacred objects, artifacts that came out of tribal lands, park lands, federal lands of some sort.

Phil Young: We had seen in New Mexico the Mimbres culture burials in the southern part of the state just ravaged over the previous couple of decades.

Phil Young: So anyway, Bill writes a proposal to U.S. Senator Jeff Bingaman and said, "We ought to start a task force. You ought to think about giving us funding." He did it all legally. (laughter)

Phil Young: Lo and behold, Senator Bingaman liked the idea. He wrote back not just to the Park Service but included the Forest Service and BLM and says, "Give me your idea."

Phil Young: The bottom line was there was an interagency task force of those three agencies that was being developed. That the Park Service was going to contribute one special agent, which became me, a park service archeologist, that was going to be more or less the evidence custodian for all of the criminal evidence that we would be taking into custody. We'd be following leads in Santa Fe, because we knew a lot of trafficking of illegal and ill-gotten gains were coming through Santa Fe. We used to say that prehistorically all roads led through Chaco Canyon, a National Park Service site. Well historically, the materials that are being stolen off of public lands through the black market, now all roads lead through Santa Fe, in the Southwest. And that was true then.

Phil Young: So, there was this interagency task force. I applied and I didn't know if I was going to get it but felt fairly good that since Bill Tanner, my supervisor, was the selecting official, I'd be given due consideration.

Phil Young: In the meantime, Bill had a heart attack. He went on medical leave. And I got picked as the regional acting chief ranger (laughs) for the time that he was out with his heart attack. He actually had a heart attack while he was in a cardiologist's office on a treadmill.

Tessa Moening: Oh, good place to have it.

Phil Young: That's a fortuitous place, yeah, to have it. (laughs) So anyway, by the time he was about a month away from coming back to work, I got a call from him. He'd been provided the cert of potential candidates to be selected, and the new park police captain at that point in time was promoting someone who would eventually become my special agent investigative partner. But as it turns out, he was the second Park Service special agent with the ARPA Task Force. I became number one. I was offered the position and immediately accepted without hesitation. Didn't even have to say, "Oh, I need to go home and talk about this." No. Usually I would not apply for positions unless I was sure that I was going to accept them. Why go through the heartache and pain of applying?

Tessa Moening: Yeah. (laughs)

Phil Young: I owe John Cook, the regional director, and Bill Tanner, to this day, a great debt of gratitude for their ability to look down the road and think strategically.

Phil Young: So, I joined the ARPA Task Force throughout pretty much, let's see, '89, '90, would have been early '91. Again, my thoughts were probably well, we'll see how this goes for the next couple of years, and it went fairly well. The Bureau of Land Management and National Park Service investigators that were assigned got along really well. We were doing what we called "running and gunning" and making cases and "taking names." We were generating case reports, much longer investigative reports than I ever dreamed of as a park ranger. Much more in-depth investigations. We early on realized that covert or undercover operations were going to be our most beneficial form of attack, because we control the information flow and we'd get people telling us things that they wouldn't tell otherwise. Like the provenance of that bowl, those items.

Phil Young: We operated as a task force for about two years. Again, I'll say that the investigators, we got along well. Wasn't the case so much with our supervisors. The Bureau of Land Management special agent in charge for the state of New Mexico – I remember when I realized that this task force's days are numbered. Even though we were getting indictments and convictions were starting to come through, I said our days are numbered when one of the BLM agents came to me and said, "Yeah, you don't want to be in that conference room right now, because I have been tasked with performing surveillance on your boss, the regional chief ranger, to try and get the goods on him doing something wrong so more or less they can blackmail him into bowing out."

Phil Young: Well, it wasn't too long before that leaked. There was a Department of Interior investigation. The inspector general didn't do it, but some park police officers came and were involved. And a park police lieutenant that I came to work with when he was a captain and I was a special agent, Sal Lauro, was part of that investigative team. There definitely were negative impacts on what occurred to the ARPA Task Force. The investigators, once the task force disbanded, Bill Tanner led a new unit. The Park Service didn't want to leave and disband and walk away from the successes that we'd had doing resource protection. So, we created our own little internal unit, called the Resources Protection Unit. Even though on paper I was shown as the chief, Bill Tanner was really the chief. So, it was Al De la Cruz, who was that second special agent that I'd mentioned, Judy Reed, who was the archeologist, and Bill and I, so we were a four-person unit for a while. We were primarily looking at ARPA-type investigations, but also NAGPRA, Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act.

Phil Young: Towards the end of the ARPA Task Force, we were starting to see more and more not archeological artifacts, because those need to be at least 100 years of age or older, but more recent but sensitive sacred objects reaching the marketplace. So, we wanted to look into that because we wanted to help out our tribal partners, quite frankly. To this day, I'm really glad that we did.

Phil Young: I still remember the telephone call that I got from a friend of mine who I didn't know at that point in time. He was an FBI agent at that time. He said that he had just gotten my name from the U.S. Attorney's Office, and they said to give me a call.

Phil Young: And I said, "Well, what do you got?"

Phil Young: He said, "I've got this informant whose mother used to run a gallery here in Santa Fe. So, he was raised in the gallery business. He spotted some objects that were being offered for sale at a trading post here on Canyon Road in Santa Fe that are illegal. Can you help?"

Phil Young: I said, "Well, probably. But describe them to me." He described some, and one was a heron jish bundle, Navajo medicine bundle. As soon as he identified a couple of them, with feathers, I said, "Have you called the Fish and Wildlife Service? We need to involve the Fish and Wildlife Service, too."

Phil Young: What came out of that was the start of an undercover operation, which just earlier this month there was a book released called *Plunder of the Ancients,* written by a former Fish and Wildlife Service agent, Cindy Schroeder. In her opening investigation, she wasn't on the investigation, I'm just telling you about now, but that's her opening chapter in this book. (laughs)

Phil Young: We got Bill Tanner to portray a hand surgeon from Chicago who was trying to acquire medicine bundles and sacred objects that were of the healing variety. He was going to be getting them out of the country. Which usually the sellers are going, oh, good. (laughter) That's good, I won't get busted. No one will arrest me!

Phil Young: Well, besides these medicine bundles, as it turns out, our informant tells us that he'd heard that there were these Navajo dance masks that were available. And there was a photo of that, too.

Phil Young: We had a little bit of a hiccup in the investigation when it turns out, when we finally got all the agencies, FBI, Park Service and Fish and Wildlife into one room, it came back that the FBI informant had an arrest warrant out on him for drug probation violation. So, we basically briefed him, talked about what our plan would be, then had to explain to him, oh, by the way, we have to take you into custody now, which we did.

Phil Young: Then Don Jochem, the FBI agent, and I worked on getting him out on I'll call it supervised parole with us being his supervisors. He'd get out of the lockup and he would do the introductions. Bill Tanner would be this undercover operator portraying a doctor from Chicago acquiring this thing.

Phil Young: As soon as Bill saw the photo of these Navajo dance masks, which are Yeibichai, if you're familiar with the term, they're considered living gods. As it turns out, they were from the estate of a deceased Hataali, a singer, a sacred singer, a medicine man. In Navajo tradition, these are supposed to

stay within the society, passed on to another Hataali and renewed, refreshed, and remain living within the four sacred mountains.

Phil Young: As it turns out, the trading company, East West Trading Company in Santa Fe, had this supplier from Scottsdale, Arizona, who would fit what we often refer to as a "rez runner" who goes out and tries and find material that people are going to be selling. He went to the family of Ray Winnie, the deceased Navajo Hataali and represented himself, and on several occasions tried to buy these. And they wouldn't do it. But on his final attempt, he told them that he was buying them on behalf of a Navajo practitioner, an apprentice Hataali who would be refreshing them, renewing them, continuing to use them within the four sacred mountains.

Phil Young: Well, within a year, he'd originally offered five thousand dollars for these. He paid ten. Within a year he was offering them to us for seventy thousand dollars. He'd get fifty, the trading company would get twenty. But it was with the understanding that they were going to go out of the country to a medical museum in Switzerland. Switzerland is known as basically the laundering of artifacts worldwide, and still is today. It's kind of disgusting in that way. But anyway, East West Trading Company and Richard Nelson Corrow was the name of this trader from Scottsdale.

Phil Young: So, the day that the sale was supposed to occur, Mr. Corrow flies over from Scottsdale. One of the owners of the trading post picks him up at the airport in Albuquerque, brings him up. Lo and behold, we're there with search warrants to try to find everything. We found much of the material, but not the Yeibichai. The masks were not there! Which perplexed us to no end. But lo and behold, while the search is still ongoing, we've located most of the things we've seen in photographs that are being offered for sale. But just not those sacred masks.

Phil Young: Don and I wander out in the parking lot and I notice there's this wooden storage shed, which isn't part of the search warrant, so we can't search there. But I wandered over to the door and there's big cracks in the wooden door. I just kind of peek through and see a cardboard box that on the outside says "Ray's Yeis" and we knew that the medicine man had been Ray Winnie.

Phil Young: So, we that afternoon went and got another search warrant for the shed. The long and the short of it is that Mr. Corrow who, in his initial appearance in front of the U.S. Magistrate District Court stated that on behalf of all archeologists and museum curators he was going to fight NAGPRA all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. The bottom line is he got his chance because he got convicted all along the way. He became the first trial under NAGPRA in U.S. District Court. He was convicted by a jury of his peers. He appealed his conviction to the 10th Circuit here in Denver. Got a full *en banc* review, which means all appellate justices in the 10th Circuit got to read his reasoning. He even recruited the Antique

Tribal Art Dealers Association to provide an amicus brief in support of his position. No go. Conviction held.

Phil Young: He then appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court, and the Supreme Court looked at the merits of the case and didn't even have a full hearing. They realized uh uh. We're not going to review this. It's had enough judicial; it had the full en banc of the 10 circuit. So, no. Conviction stands.

Phil Young: I remember I was acting park superintendent for four months in 1998; I was down at Coronado Memorial on that assignment when the Supreme Court finally made that decision. Mr. Corrow called me up, tracked me down, actually, where I was. The first words out of his mouth were, "Well, Mr. Young. I hope you're happy. You've made me a criminal."

Phil Young: I said, "Well, I don't think I actually did that." (laughter) "I think your behaviors had something to do with that."

Phil Young: Then he went on to tell me about how he and his girlfriend and son just that weekend had been out at a unit of Bandelier National Monument there in New Mexico. His girlfriend and son had picked up an arrowhead. The unit was at Tsankawi. And a ranger came and took the arrowhead away from him. And he said, "You know, arrowheads are exempt from the Archeological Resource Protection Act."

Phil Young: I said, "Technically, penalties under ARPA are what are exempt. But that arrowhead's protected by the 36th Code of Federal Regulations." Anyway, I tried to reason with him for about half an hour, but he never was convinced. And some people never will be. To this day, he still thinks he did right.

Phil Young: One of the very compelling witnesses we had on the stand from the academic world was a lady by the name of Dr. Charlotte Frisbie. She'd written a book years before. She was from Southern Illinois University. Her book was all about Navajo jish, Navajo magical medicine and objects. Before he had ever sold these items or brought these items for sale to our attention, he had called Charlotte twice. She had said, "Since I've written this book, NAGPRA's been passed. You can't trade or sell these kind of objects any longer. It's no longer legal." Yeah. And he disagreed with her! Even there in court, he was trying to pick an argument with her, and she was kind of the western world academic expert in the subject matter. (laughs) And he was trying to pick a fight with her in court.

Phil Young: But he lost out. Lost big time. He eventually came back into the news in Santa Fe, making front page news years later, when he was at a demonstration at the corner of two of our major boulevards. It was during the George W. Bush administration, and there were antiwar demonstrations going on. Anyway, he had a sign that said, "I'll pay a thousand dollars to anyone who can prove that Bush lied." But that's not what got him to the front page of the newspaper. It's when he got into a shoving match with a disabled veteran who was in a wheelchair at that

same intersection. That's what made the front page. I remember thinking, okay, Richard Corrow is still around. He's probably still going out to parks, too. So that was one of the resource protection unit's cases.

Phil Young: It was about that time, that was mid '90s when we did that undercover operation. It was about that time that a lot of federal government agencies were doing some major reorganizations, and the Park Service was one of them. The resource protection unit got reorganized. Many of us, being regional office employees, were being asked to, well, look at park assignments. Which didn't bother me. I liked the idea of those. My compadre Al De la Cruz ended up taking a park assignment as a special agent at Sequoia Kings Canyon. Well, he was originally from the Porterville area, just down the road from Sequoia Kings Canyon. So, it was going home for him.

Phil Young: Bill Tanner was eligible for retirement and decided he was going to retire, since they were breaking up the unit. Judy Reed went to Pecos National Historical Park as the park archeologist. She was from the area as well and wanted to stay close to Santa Fe. She'd been born and raised there. Her maiden name was Lujan and her father was a Bataan Death March survivor in World War Two. They have a very proud, honored tradition there in Northern New Mexico. The Bataan survivors. But anyway, Judy wanted to stay, and she did.

Phil Young: As the luck would have it, I stayed in Santa Fe to continue doing the work that I'd been doing. So now it was time for another shift in strategy. I got back together with our brothers and sisters of other federal agencies, many of which who'd been people that I had worked with on the ARPA Task Force. John Fryar was an investigator with BLM on the ARPA Task Force. He had moved to the Bureau of Indian Affairs to do ARPA and NAGPRA investigations. His mother was from Acoma Pueblo. So, he was the national BIA investigator doing these kind of investigations, and he was based in Albuquerque. I was in Santa Fe. Gary Olson, who was the BLM investigator, was over in Arizona. But we certainly would help each other out on various things.

Phil Young: Continued investigations with Fish and Wildlife Service. The Fish and Wildlife agent that I'd worked with on the East West Trading Company had moved on to a new duty station. I know he went to Washington, DC for a while, and then back out into the field. A new agent had come in, and this was Lucinda, or Cindy Schroeder, that I had just mentioned earlier, who's written a couple of books. One was an undercover hunter guide, big game hunter guide operation in Alaska called *Hunt for Justice.* She had written that a few years ago and decided that some of the investigations that I'm about to talk about would be a good subject matter for those who are interested in cultural resources and artifacts and trying to protect them. So, she was now in.

Phil Young: One of the investigations that we were doing she got involved with. That gave her a taste for it to the point where, at a certain point in time she decided okay, even though she was a supervisor she kind of missed field operations, because as a supervisor, as she wrote in her book, all she's doing is grading reports that other investigators are doing. They're out there actually in the field doing the work, finding out what's going on.

Phil Young: So, she goes undercover. Shortly before she went undercover, I'd gone to her and said, "You know, I'm burned. They know me. I've been in court." In fact, I went to an artifacts show even the year before and just walked down the aisle of the artifacts show, because we'd done an operation at one of the artifacts shows once where I was the operative, and we ended up seizing a motor home out of the parking lot of one of the vendors at the artifacts show at the Hilton Hotel. So, yeah, I'm well known. At this particular artifacts show, the actress Ali McGraw is showing.

Phil Young: The guy that I'm walking down the corridor with is another Park Service agent who's not from the area. He looks at me and says, "You know, you're drawing a lot of attention."

Phil Young: I said, "Oh. It must be my Hawaiian shirt." (laughter)

Phil Young: No, they knew who I was. In fact, even the guys at the door when we got our tickets said, "Oh. You're back," and I hadn't been back to that show in probably three or four years. So.

Tessa Moening: They remembered.

Phil Young: Yeah. So anyway, I had gone to Cindy and said, "You know, it would be really good for you to think about you using your undercover expertise. There's certainly Fish and Wildlife violations galore that are occurring at a lot of these shows. And I bet you could generate a lot of good information and intelligence for us."

Phil Young: At that point in time she said no. But she started another undercover operation and actually got outed by agents from her own agency, and that's when she joined the national special operations group of Fish and Wildlife investigators that did long-term undercover ops. Her goal was going to be looking at the theft and trafficking of Native American cultural patrimony and sacred objects. So, we had this thing going.

Phil Young: Before too long, we realized we needed help. It needed to be bigger than just the Department of Interior. So, we again went to our friends in Department of Justice. The FBI had one solo arts and artifact crime theft investigator in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, at the time, and he became our collaborator. And we got a European investigator out of Norway who became our European buyer, if you will, for these objects. That's how we were able to get an in with some of the galleries in Santa Fe.

Phil Young: Long-time gallery owner there by the name of Joshua Baer. And greed led him down a very dark hallway. Greed in this case; was for years we had seen items and objects of cultural patrimony that had been on display

openly that he had for sale that had been then removed. And he claims he had seen the light. You know, he was repatriating things. Some of the tribal elders didn't believe that.

Phil Young: But anyway, as we looked into it, we did find a supplier who did go to the various reservations and bring back objects to him that were for sale. And that led to a large investigation that ended up getting several indictments and convictions against Joshua Baer. His gallery is closed down.

Phil Young: At about the same time, John Fryar, my friend from BIA that I was telling you about, at the same time that Cindy's starting, I had an informant who had been the owner of a gallery for about 20 years out in Gallup, New Mexico, real close to the reservation and close to Chaco Canyon and Hubble Trading Post and other Park Service areas. He was willing to introduce John in an undercover capacity as a buyer. Lo and behold, it worked out really well. John wasn't targeting this certain individual that came upon his radar, because quite frankly, we had busted him with the ARPA Task Force, and he was still on probation for NAGPRA violations. But lo and behold, he was still active in the business while he was on probation. This guy's name was Rodney Tidwell.

Phil Young: Mr. Tidwell lived in a high-end house in Payson, Arizona, that I'd heard eventually sold for about $650,000, but when we were doing the search warrant on his house, which I led the team doing, I remember looking at his income tax returns. And for the previous three years, he'd never made over $10,000. Yet he had a nice house and high-end everything. Van, boat, pickup truck.

Phil Young: Due to that undercover investigation, which resulted in the recovery of objects being offered for sale from Hopi, Zuni, Acoma, so you could see how he really got around, while he was on probation, we got 20 felony counts through the indictment process. He was convicted at jury trial of all of those. And he ended up spending 36 months in federal prison for that. That was somewhat satisfying. You know, getting the objects back to where they were supposed to be.

Phil Young: One of the darker aspects of that investigation was that one of the Hopi suppliers, when he got indicted federally, took his own life within about 48 hours. His family, his wife and children, were ostracized by the Hopi and sent off the Hopi reservation.

Tessa Moening: Wow.

Phil Young: To this day, I think they're still living off the reservation. Off Hopi lands. Because of that, the U.S. Attorney's Office decided not to prosecute further. Other Hopi suppliers of sacred objects were treated in their own tribal court, and it's my understanding that about 10 of them got about one year in tribal jail. To this day I'm thinking that probably the jail time was the easier part of their time than living with the stigma of what they were involved in within their own tribe and culture.

Tessa Moening: Right. Yeah.

Phil Young: So that's pretty much what I did the last 10 years of my career. I became known as, well, I was called "the pot Nazi" by *Indian Artifact* magazine. The editor of that was very anti-ARPA, very pro-collector, and "what are you doing trying to seize these?" But you know, the burden of proof is really on the government. Archeological investigations are very complex. They're very hard to complete successfully. And I've had more than one individual who had a lot of experience in undercover operations with drug investigations after about a month of doing ARPA just come to me and shake their heads and go, "This is tough! Back there, cocaine's cocaine. It's illegal. But here, you've got to prove that it came off federal land."

Phil Young: I said, "Welcome to my world." (laughter) Yep.

Phil Young: And when you ask them, it's always going to be, "It was just taken off of my uncle's private ranch."

Tessa Moening: (laughs) Of course.

Phil Young: You've got to prove that it was government property, that it was taken from federal or Indian lands. And often that's hard. You have to often gain their trust before they're going to open up. Or as it was also pointed out to me by Bill Tanner, divorces often end up with a lot of information coming forth.

Tessa Moening: (laughs) Whatever it takes.

Phil Young: Yeah. Yeah.

Tessa Moening: Yeah.

Phil Young: The last couple of years we had, again through the U.S. Attorney's Office, an interagency environmental crimes work group, we called it. Instead of a task force. We didn't share an office. But about once a month we'd get together at the U.S. Attorney's Office and talk about environmental type crimes. Not just all archeological, but the full range. You know, it could be the dumping of caustic chemicals. It could be wildlife poaching rings. A lot of folks don't think of art and artifacts being much of a black market issue, but if you ask Interpol what the top illegal violations are as far as generating money, it's drugs, it's illegal firearms, it's money laundering. And then right behind that is wildlife and art, kind of together, that goes into the money laundering picture as well. Because the cartels realize that when you have to transfer money from one country to another, what better way to do it than art? And it still goes on today. Even though I've been retired a number of years, and I retired from the Park Service only to take a job as an archeologist for the State Historic Preservation Office. That's the SHPO [State Historic Preservation Office] hat that I wear.

Tessa Moening: Yeah. Okay.

Phil Young: I've been eligible for retirement and was offered an archeologist job, and figured okay, let's come full circle.

Tessa Moening: Yeah. (laughs)

Phil Young: But I still find myself involved in archeological protection to this point in time. In fact, on this clipboard I even have an announcement for a heritage crimes investigation course that I'm going to be teaching in December in Silver City, New Mexico. It not only gets New Mexico Department of Public Safety Law Enforcement continuing-ed credit, it gets archeologists 20 hours of credit, too, for their state archeological permit requirements. So, I try and remain in both worlds.

Tessa Moening: Yeah. It sounds like you're, you know, maybe some of the legacy that you left is really on part of collaboration and then also protection in the park service.

Phil Young: Yeah. Throughout the 1990s, the whole time that I was the special agent doing various investigations and activities that I've been telling you about, I was also a Type 1 safety officer on one of the Southwest incident management teams. It's been good. And I continue to do that.

Phil Young: I was out on a couple of fires in central Washington this year. And often people ask me, "Well, how long are you going to continue to do this?" I think I owe the Park Service a lot, and I think I want to continue as long as I can contribute.

Tessa Moening: Right. That's great.

Phil Young: It's nice when you get to be my age that you think you can still contribute.

Tessa Moening: (laughs) Yeah. We need to start wrapping up here.

Phil Young: You do? Okay.

Tessa Moening: Yeah. This is my colleague.

Phil Young: All right.

Tessa Moening: So, I guess if you're comfortable, we'll leave it there?

Phil Young: Yeah. I had a couple of other things I was going to mention. But that's okay.

Tessa Moening: Okay. Maybe we'll get you next year. (laughs)

Phil Young: Oh. Can we continue next year?

Tessa Moening: Yeah, yeah, we'll have to see. But thank you so much for everything.

Phil Young: Yeah. Okay. All right.

[END OF TRACK 1]

[END OF INTERVIEW]